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# Agricultural Situation

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## EMERGENCY FEED GRAIN PROGRAM GETS UNDERWAY

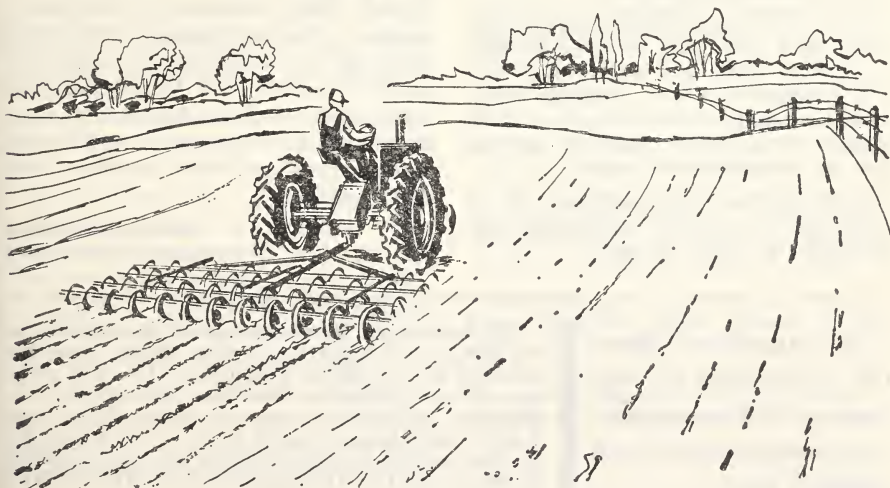
If you're going to plant corn or grain sorghums this year, your plans may be affected by the emergency feed grain program.

The program, which was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Kennedy last month, calls for higher price supports but smaller acreages of corn and grain sorghum. The program is designed to prevent further

buildup of the feed grain surplus and bring production more nearly in line with needs.

Secretary Freeman says what the program actually accomplishes depends primarily on the extent to which you and other feed grain growers participate in it.

All producers of corn and grain sorghum can take part in the program.



## PROGRAM—Continued

To participate, you must divert at least 20 percent of your corn and grain sorghum base acreage (1959 and 1960) to conservation uses.

In return, you will be eligible for price supports on corn and grain sorghum, and you will receive a payment for the acreage diverted from these two crops. You will also be eligible for price supports on other feed grains.

The national average corn support price is \$1.20 a bushel—14 cents a bushel more than in 1960. The average support price for grain sorghum is \$1.93 a hundredweight—41 cents higher than in 1960.

Conservation uses for acreage diverted under the program will vary by areas. They will include cover crops, trees, water storage, and wildlife protection. The diverted acreage cannot be harvested or pastured.

You will be paid for acres you divert to conservation use. Payments on the first 20 percent of the acreage diverted will be equal to 50 percent of the normal production of the diverted acreage times the county support price. For example, if your county's support price for corn is \$1.20 and normal production on your farm is 50 bushels an acre, the payment would be \$30.00 an acre. For diversion of an additional 20 percent of the base, the rate is based on 60 percent of normal production.

Up to half the estimated total payment for a farm may be made as soon as possible after you signify that you will cooperate in the program. This advance payment will help you with current production expenses without the use of additional credit.

This and the final payment will be made in negotiable certificates redeemable in grain or cash.

If you do not cooperate in the program, you will *not* be eligible for price supports on any corn, grain sorghum, oats, barley, or rye you produce in 1961. The non-cooperator will get the market price, whatever it may be.

Since payments-in-kind will add to marketable supplies of feed grains, the non-cooperator should not count on the advantage he might otherwise derive from staying out while others participate in a production adjustment program.

The non-cooperator should not expect to build up his acreage base for future programs either. The Department will strongly recommend to the Congress that any legislation involving establishment of base acreages for production adjustment should give no advantages to producers who do not cooperate in the 1961 feed grain program.

Farmers who do not normally produce corn or grain sorghum, will be eligible for price supports on barley, oats, and rye.

Your county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation committee can answer any questions you have on the program.

Secretary Freeman says, "You have a workable program, a practical program, to turn the tide and start to get on top of the feed grain surplus. The program *can* accomplish four things: Help increase farm income; prevent a further buildup of the feed grain surplus and possibly reduce it; reduce ultimate costs to taxpayers by about \$500 million; and help assure the consumer of a continuation of fair and stable prices for meat, poultry, and dairy products."

Willard Lamphere  
*Information Division, CSS*

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# WHAT ARE FARMERS GOING TO PLANT THIS YEAR?

If farmers' intentions on March 1 are realized, they will plant the 16 major spring crops on nearly 264 million acres—slightly fewer than in 1960 and the smallest for these crops since 1939.

If we add an allowance for the other crops—winter wheat, cotton, and a number of minor field, seed, and vegetable crops—we get a total for 59 crops of around 330 million acres—about the same as last year, but 5 million fewer than the acreage planted in 1959.

Farmers reported their planting intentions before much was known about the feed grain program. This program may cause some shifts in early season plans.

Now for a look at prospects for specific crops:

**CORN.** Farmers intended on March 1 to plant 82 million acres, only slightly less than last year's acreage. If the feed grain program reduces acreage, plantings could drop to the lowest point in this century.

**HAY.** The 69 million acres expected to be cut in 1961 is about the same as last year but well below average.

**WHEAT.** Including winter wheat seeded last fall, farmers plan to grow 56 million acres of all wheat this year, nearly 1 percent more than in 1960.

**OATS.** The expected acreage of about 32 million is only slightly above last year's record low.

**SOYBEANS.** Soybean acreage is expanding again after a decline in 1959. Farmers plan to plant a record 26 million acres, 9 percent more than in 1960. With the higher support price recently announced for the 1961 crop, some further increase could take place.

**SORGHUMS.** Growers intend to plant 4 percent fewer acres this year than in 1960. The indicated 18.8 million acres is the smallest since 1953. Farmers may plant fewer acres to

sorghums than reported, now that the feed grain program has been approved.

**BARLEY.** Plantings are expected to total 15 million acres, slightly less than last year but 12 percent above the 1950-59 average.

**FLAXSEED.** Plans point to 3.2 million acres, a 10 percent reduction from 1960 and the smallest since 1946.

**RICE.** Growers intend to seed 1.6 million acres to rice, the same acreage as last year but 12 percent less than the average.

**PEANUTS.** Farmers intentions indicated 1.5 million acres will be planted this year, 2 percent less than last year and 21 percent below the average.

**DRY BEANS AND PEAS.** Bean growers expect to plant 1.5 million acres—about the same as last year. The indicated acreage of dry peas, at 331,000 acres, is nearly a tenth more than last year.

**TOBACCO.** Farmers plan to grow 1.2 million acres of tobacco this year, 2 percent more than in 1960.

**SUGAR BEETS.** With allotments lifted for the 1961 crop, plantings are expected to set a record high of 1.1 million acres—about 11 percent more than in 1960 and a fourth above average.

**POTATOES.** Farmers plan a 7-percent increase in the acreage of late summer and fall potatoes. Total potato plantings are estimated at 1.5 million acres, 5 percent more than last year and the average. Sweetpotato acreage is expected to be the same as in 1960 but a third below average.

Many things may change farmers' plans—weather, plant disease, prices, and even the March Intentions report itself. The feed grain program will be an important additional factor in shaping final planting plans this year.

T. M. Knapp  
C. E. Burkhead  
*Agricultural Estimates Division*

# CONSUMPTION OF FOOD FATS—VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

We're eating more fat today than we did 25 years ago.

The increase in fat consumption is attributed to the invisible fats—those contained in dairy products (except butter), meats, eggs, fruits, vegetables, and cereals. These fats comprise about 60 percent of those we consume. The rest comes from the visible fats—butter, lard, margarine, shortening, and cooking and salad oils.

Our total annual consumption of food fats—both visible and invisible—has increased to nearly 120 pounds a person in the last several years, compared with around 115 pounds during the 1940's, and 108 pounds in 1935-39.

Per capita use of visible food fats has changed little in the past generation. It averaged 45.5 pounds in 1960, compared with 45.1 pounds in 1935-39. Major shifts have, however, occurred within the visible fat group over the years. We are now consuming more margarine, shortening, and cooking and salad oils than we did in the pre-war years, but less butter and lard.

Consumption of invisible food fats has shown an upward trend. In 1935-39, the average use per person was 62.7 pounds. In the last several years, it has been in the 73-74 pound range. Much of the increase in invisible fat consumption has been in meat, poultry, fish, and game. Consumption of fats in these products rose from around 32 pounds a person in 1935-39 to about 42 pounds in 1960.

Major shifts in the use of visible food fats and oils have occurred over the past 40 years, even though per capita consumption has been relatively stable at around 45 pounds. Total consumption, however, increased from about 5 billion pounds in the 1920's to over 3.1 billion in 1960, reflecting the growth in population.

Substitution has been continually taking place, both among the three major food fat product groups—table spreads (butter and margarine), cooking fats (lard and shortening), and

cooking and salad oils—as well as among products within each group. Important shifts also have taken place in the fats and oils used in the end product.

Reduced consumption of table spreads has been about offset by an increase in other edible oils, mainly cooking and salad oils. Total consumption of the cooking fats has shown no consistent upward or downward trend.

In 1960 we consumed about 45.5 pounds of visible food fats per person, about the same as in 1958 and 1959. This compares with the 40 year average of about 45 pounds. There were some important shifts in the types of fats consumed in 1960, as the postwar consumption trends were extended. Apparent disappearance of butter and direct use of lard were down, but this was offset by increased usage of margarine and other edible oils. Consumption of shortening and salad and cooking oils showed no change.

Margarine consumption reached a new high of 9.4 pounds per person in 1960, 0.2 pounds more than in 1959. Butter consumed per person averaged 7.8 pounds in 1960, 0.2 pounds fewer than in 1959, and the smallest of record.

Shortening consumption averaged 12.6 pounds per person in 1960, the same as the record 1959 usage. Use of lard in 1960 declined to 7.9 pounds per person, 1.1 pounds fewer than in 1959 and the lowest of record. Per capita consumption of other edible oils (mainly cooking and salad oils) averaged 11.4 pounds in 1960.

Retail prices for most food fats and oils in 1960 dropped to their lowest level in the past decade. Retail prices of these food fats probably will average slightly higher in 1961 than in 1960, reflecting a higher level of prices for the food fats and oils used to produce these products.

George W. Kromer  
*Agricultural Economics Division*



# OUTLOOK



An emergency feed grain program was signed into law by the President on March 22. It provides payments to growers who divert part of their corn and sorghum acreage to conserving use.

In early March, before details of the 1961 feed grain program were known, farmers indicated intentions of planting about the same acreage in 1961 as they did last year. But with the new program, plans for certain crops, particularly corn and sorghums, will be subject to change.

## Broilers

The outlook is for larger broiler production this year than last and prices are likely to be lower than the year before during the summertime period of peak seasonal demand. Broiler prices have declined since late February, when they were the highest in 10 months.



## Eggs

Second quarter egg prices will be lower than the year before. Because of the prospective increase in egg supply, the seasonal price rise this fall is likely to be smaller than in recent years. Egg prices in March were running above those of a year ago, but by a narrower difference than in the preceding

6 months. The mid-February U.S. average price to farmers was 39.4 cents per dozen, 1 cent higher than a month earlier, and 10 cents above last year.



## Fruit

Demand for Florida oranges, especially by processors, continued seasonally strong during February and March. As a result, remaining supplies are now somewhat smaller than a year ago with prices substantially higher.

The early spring crop of strawberries is expected to be about 23 percent larger than the 1960 crop, mainly because of increased yields per acre. Most of the increase is in Louisiana, with peak movement to market expected in late March.

## Fats and Oils

The level of food fat prices has risen over 35 percent since the beginning of the marketing year, the biggest price swing since 1955-56. Main factors: Smaller supplies coupled with record export and domestic demand. Leading the advance are cottonseed and soybean oils closely followed by lard. While prices for these commodities have probably shown their greatest strength, they will still remain firm this spring and summer, averaging well above the same period last year.

## OUTLOOK



Continued . . .

Soybean supplies will be somewhat smaller the last half of the 1960-61 marketing year than a year earlier. The supply situation will become tight before new crop beans become available, usually around mid-September. Growers expect to plant a record 26.4 million acres, 9 percent more than last year, and 6 percent above the 1958 high.

Crushing of soybeans for oil and meal in 1960-61 will likely total around 400 million bushels compared with 392 million last season. With exports estimated around the 141 million bushels of last season, carryover of about 5 million bushels on October 1, 1961, will be down sharply from the 23 million bushels of a year ago, and the smallest since 1956.



### Dairy

With an expected increase in milk production, both cash receipts from dairy products and income to dairy farmers will be higher this year than in 1960. On March 10, price supports were raised for manufacturing milk to \$3.40 per hundredweight from \$3.22 and for butterfat to 60.4 cents per pound from 59.6 cents. The higher supports mean higher prices to farmers for these products in 1961 and early 1962.

### Vegetables

Supplies of a number of tender fresh vegetables are much larger this winter than last. These include snap beans, cucumbers, sweet corn, eggplant, green pepper, and tomatoes. Prices for these items are much lower than the relatively high prices of a year earlier.

Production estimates for a few early spring crops indicate asparagus, lettuce and onions substantially smaller than a year ago; broccoli and cauliflower, moderately smaller. Prospective acreage of early spring tomatoes is about the same as last year; cabbage, a tenth larger.

Supplies of potatoes during the next few months are likely to remain materially below those of a year earlier.



### Cotton

A record high consumption of foreign mills and some increase in cotton stocks abroad are main factors in larger exports this season. Exports of raw cotton during 1960-61 are expected to total about 6.5 million bales. Exports have been higher only in two other seasons since World War II: In 1959-60, about 7.2 million bales; and 1956-57, 7.6 million bales.

### Hogs

Hog marketings are declining seasonally and will continue below 1960 levels until about mid-year. (See the story on page 7.)

### Wool

Production of domestic shorn and pulled wool in 1960 was up 2 percent from 1959. (See the story on page 10.)



### Cattle

Prospects are for relatively stable cattle prices this spring. Marketing of cattle are running above a year ago, and will probably continue above during the next few months.

## THE FARMER'S SHARE

The farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar was 39 cents in January 1961, a cent lower than it was in December. In January 1960 it was 38 cents.



# HOG NUMBERS ARE UP IN 10 CORN BELT STATES

Farmers in 10 North Central States had 40.8 million hogs and pigs on March 1, 4 percent more than a year earlier.

Increases in numbers from a year earlier were registered in 8 of the 10 States. There was no change in Illinois, and a 2 percent decrease in Wisconsin. The 10 States—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas—produced 75 percent of our pig crop in 1960.

Eleven percent fewer hogs and pigs were on hand March 1 than last December 1. Commercial slaughter during December and January was 15 percent smaller than during these months a year earlier. Weekly slaughter rates under Federal inspection in February were 10 percent under a year earlier.

Hogs and pigs 6 months old and over on March 1 totaled 13.5 million head—a 3 percent decrease from a year earlier. The number of hogs and pigs 3 to 6 months of age increased 6 percent. On December 1, there were 7 percent more pigs under 3 months old than a year earlier.

The number of hogs 6 months old or older, excluding spring sows, was about 10 percent smaller on March 1 than on March 1, 1960.

## Winter Farrowings . . .

The number of pigs under 3 months of age on hand March 1 was 9 percent above a year earlier. This increase reflects an 8 percent increase in the number of sows which farrowed from December through February. This 8 percent increase was indicated in the December 1 breeding intentions report.

Farrowings were larger in all 3 months, but most of the increase occurred in January and February. Litter

sizes averaged slightly larger for the 10 States than a year earlier, with increases in some of the Western Corn Belt States offsetting decreases in the remaining States.

Sows bred and intended for farrowing in March, April, and May this year totaled 3.7 million head, 8 percent more than a year ago and 21 percent below the 1950-59 average. All 10 States showed increases from a year earlier for this period. The March-May total is 3 percent larger than the intentions reported in December.

## Spring Crop . . .

The number of sows farrowed and intended to farrow from December 1960 through May 1961 is 5.5 million head—8 percent larger than for the spring of 1960 but 9 percent below the 10-year average. This number of spring sows is 2 percent larger than the spring farrowing intentions reported as of December 1, 1960.

Increases range from 3 percent in Wisconsin to 23 percent in Nebraska. The increase for Kansas is 20 percent; for South Dakota, 17 percent; Missouri, Minnesota, and Ohio 8 percent each; Iowa and Indiana 7 percent each; and Illinois 4 percent.

Intentions indicate that 2.4 million sows will farrow during the summer quarter—June through August. This would be 5 percent more than the 2.3 million head that farrowed during this quarter of 1960, and 19 percent more than average.

Farmers in 3 of the 10 States, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, reported no change in summer farrowing intentions from a year earlier. In the other 7 States increases ranged from 3 percent in Indiana to 20 percent in Kansas.

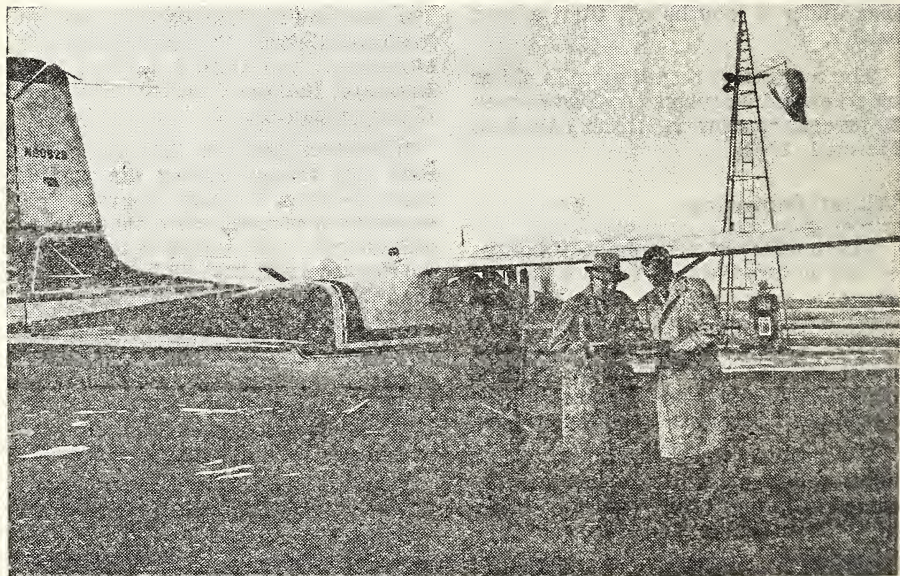
R. P. Christeson  
*Agricultural Estimates Division*





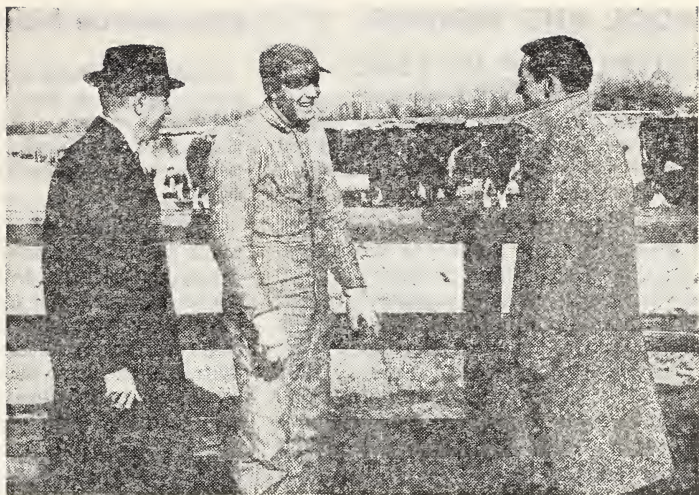
## FLYING STATISTICIANS . . .

Cattle feeding is big business in Nebraska—on January 1, there were 668,000 head in feedlots there. Demands from feeders and others for more information on the feeding situation are increasing. Nebraska's agricultural statisticians have taken to the air to meet this demand. Once a year they rent a plane and fly over the concentrated feeding areas looking for new feedlots. After landing, the new lots are visited and the operators are asked to cooperate on the "cattle on feed" report.

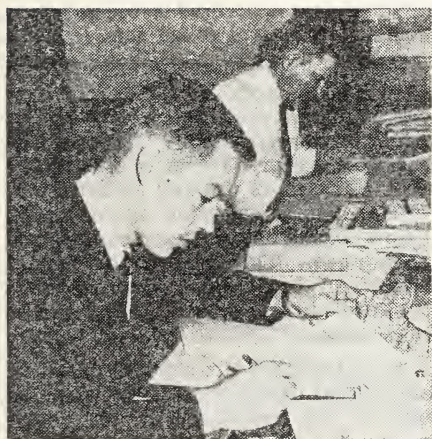


Statisticians check their plans before the 2-hour flight over the feedlots. During the flight, two statisticians mark the location of new feedlots on maps, a third acts as navigator.



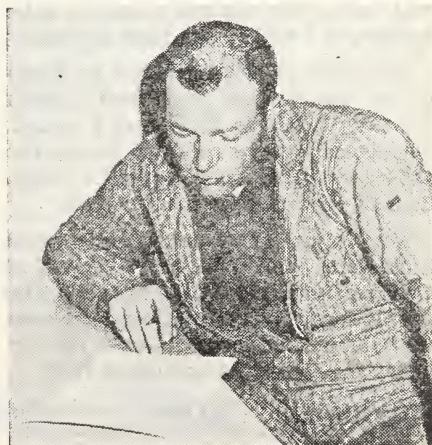


Statisticians chat with an operator whose feedlot they spotted from the air. After they land, the "stats" drive out to the feedlots and ask the operators if they'll cooperate by reporting their operations. Most do.



Statisticians analyze and interpret reports sent in by feedlot operators—and come up with an estimate for the State. State estimates are sent to Washington where they're reviewed and combined into a national report by the Crop Reporting Board.

Mission accomplished. The feedlot operator reads the "cattle on feed" report, which helps him plan his operation. The State statisticians send the report to operators and others who are interested in keeping up with the cattle feeding situation.





## WOOL AND MOHAIR OUTPUT UP IN 1960

Around 300 million pounds of grease wool (shorn and pulled) were produced in the United States during 1960, 2 percent more than in 1959 and 12 percent more than the 1949-58 average.

The 267 million pounds of shorn wool valued at \$115 million produced in 1960 compare with 260 million pounds valued at \$112 million in 1959. The average price growers received for shorn wool from April 1960 through January 1961 was 43.2 cents a pound. The average price received during the 1959 marketing year (April 1959 through March 1960) was also 43.2 cents. The 10-year average is 54.8 cents.

A total of 31.2 million sheep and lambs was shorn in 1960, 1 percent more than in 1959. The average weight per fleece in 1960 was 8.55 pounds, compared with the record high of 8.57 pounds in 1955.

Pulled wool production totaled 33.6 million pounds in 1960, 3 percent fewer than in 1959 and 6 percent fewer than the 10-year average. Commercial slaughter of sheep and lambs during 1960 increased 5 percent from 1959.

### Mohair . . .

Mohair production totaled 24.4 million pounds in 1960, 1 percent larger than in 1959, in the 7 leading States—Mo., Tex., N. Mex., Ariz., Utah, Oreg., and Calif. The clip was valued at \$21.4 million, \$1.9 million less than in 1959.

The average price received by growers for mohair from April 1960 through January 1961 was 87.7 cents a pound. The average price received during the 1959 marketing year was 96.5 cents. The 10-year average is 81.9 cents.

Approximately 3.9 million goats and kids were clipped in the 7 States in 1960, 3 percent more than in 1959. The average weight of hair clipped per goat and kid was 6.3 pounds—only slightly below the record 6.4 pounds of 1959.

Frasier T. Galloway  
*Agricultural Estimates Division*

## Abundance Aids Needy

Today's farmers and food producers are playing a vital role in feeding America's needy. Estimates indicate that during March some 6 million people were eligible to receive donated foods.

The urgency of the problem was made plain in President Kennedy's first executive order, dated January 21, which directed the Secretary of Agriculture to "take immediate steps to expand and improve the program of food distribution . . . so as to make available to all needy families a greater variety and quantity of food."

Acting swiftly to carry out this order, the USDA within 10 days began buying canned pork and gravy, dry beans, and dried whole egg to supplement the butter, lard, flour, cornmeal, dry nonfat milk, and rice previously available. In addition, Government-owned peanuts and oats were ordered processed into peanut butter and rolled oats.

Besides increasing the variety and quantity of foods available, the Department took steps to speed their distribution to more people. Early in February, Secretary Freeman offered the State Governors the full assistance of USDA food distribution specialists to help plan maximum usage of our food abundance. This month the newly-broadened food donation program is operating in more than 1,200 counties in 46 States.

As in the past, the storage, handling and actual distribution of the food, as well as the responsibility for determining the eligibility of applicants, are matters supervised directly by State, county and local authorities. The Department's main concern is to see to it that sufficient quantities of abundant commodities are made available.

For the farmer, this expanded food distribution program can have many benefits. Besides increasing the usage of abundant foods, it has provided an opportunity to help one's less fortunate neighbors and, perhaps most important of all, it has focused national attention on the need to improve the consumption and distribution of our agricultural abundance.

# OUR TOBACCO EXPORTS ARE UP

After 4 years of decline, our tobacco exports increased in 1960. Exports of unmanufactured tobacco totaled 495 million pounds (556 million pounds farm-sales weight) last year—6½ percent above 1959 and 3 percent above 1958. The value of the 1960 exports—\$378 million—was a record high.

All types, however, did not share in the volume increase. The upturn was principally in flue-cured, which usually accounts for around four-fifths of our total tobacco exports. Flue-cured exports increased by 9 percent. Burley and fire-cured, which last year accounted for 7 percent and 5 percent of the total, each rose 5 percent. On the other hand, there were declines in exports of Maryland, dark air-cured, and cigar leaf.

Several factors caused the increase in flue-cured exports. The 1960 crop was 16 percent larger than the 1959 crop and was above average in quality. In addition, stocks in several foreign countries—notably our principal foreign market, the United Kingdom—were at reduced levels. Early in 1960 the United Kingdom removed certain financial restrictions on the purchase of tobacco from dollar areas.

The Netherlands, usually the third or fourth biggest customer for our tobacco, stepped up takings probably in anticipation of increased import duties arranged under the European Common Market agreement. A blue mold infestation in Europe—affecting West Germany, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, and some other countries—also may have increased the demand for some U.S. types.

## Markets . . .

The United Kingdom accounted for 36 percent of our tobacco exports in 1960. It took a fourth more than in 1959, and the largest quantity since 1955. West Germany, the second ranking market, took 7 percent more. Other major foreign outlets were the

Netherlands, Australia, Belgium, Japan, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, and Switzerland. These 10 countries took around 80 percent of our exports of unmanufactured tobacco last year.

## Obstacles . . .

While 1960 was encouraging for most of our tobacco growers, most of the obstacles which have kept us from sharing in the increase in world tobacco trade still remain. Before World War II, we supplied 41 percent of the leaf tobacco moving in free-world trade. The volume of our exports has been relatively well-maintained, but our share of the world total dropped to 33 percent in 1959.

Contributing to the failure of U.S. tobacco exports to gain along with the rise in world trade are the sharply increased production abroad and numerous trade barriers of different forms. These trade barriers include (1) high import duties in many countries, (2) preferential import duties, notably the preference granted by the United Kingdom on tobacco of Commonwealth origin, (3) bilateral trade agreements, such as those entered into by Turkey and Greece—principal producers and exporters of oriental tobacco, (4) mixing regulations, whereby manufacturers in some countries are granted certain financial concessions by their governments to encourage use of domestic tobacco, (5) purchase agreements, such as the one currently in force which virtually guarantees an annual market in the United Kingdom for at least 90 million pounds of Rhodesian flue-cured, and (6) other restrictions, such as monopoly practices, licensing and exchange controls, and import quotas.

These barriers have existed for many years. A more recent development that may adversely affect U.S. tobacco exports is the tariff structure on tobacco agreed upon by the European Common

(continued on the next page)





Market—West Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, and Italy. In 1960 the 6 member countries took 136 million pounds (export weight) of U.S. tobacco. This was over a fourth of our tobacco exports. This group of countries ranked second only to the United Kingdom as a foreign market for our leaf.

Tariff arrangements concluded under the Common Market agreement concern (1) the progressive lowering of import duties among member countries with the aim of eventually eliminating internal duties, and (2) the establishment of a common tariff on tobacco to replace those in effect in the individual member states. The United States, in negotiations currently under way in Geneva, is seeking more favorable rates for U.S. tobacco than those now scheduled.

U.S. tobacco has long been prized all over the world for its superior characteristics, including flavor and aroma. But price considerations are important to many countries. The new method of supporting the prices of U.S. tobacco, enacted by legislation in February 1960, should moderate price advances formerly caused by the steady rise in support levels.

This measure should help our tobacco from being priced out of world markets, but other things need to be done to meet increased competition from Rhodesia, Canada, India, Turkey, Greece, and Italy.

Growers should avoid using those varieties and cultural practices that result in tobacco lacking the high quality that foreign importers have always associated with U.S. leaf. Research is currently under way to develop improved methods of harvesting and curing. This research is designed to reduce production costs, which would help our competitive position in world markets. But any sizable expansion in our tobacco exports will depend largely on an effective reduction in the trade barriers that exist abroad.

S. M. Sackrin  
*Agricultural Economics Division*

## ON FEED

Producers had 1.6 million sheep and lambs on feed for market in 7 major feeding States on March 1—35 percent fewer than on January 1. Texas showed an increase of 2 percent from January 1. Decreases were 61 percent in Kansas; 51 percent in California; 39 percent in Nebraska; 35 percent in Colorado; 33 percent in South Dakota; and 23 percent in Iowa. The number on feed in Texas does not reflect the total number of yearlings that will be marketed during the next few months as some yearlings were not on feed on March 1.

Of the total on feed, 579,000 were placed on feed during January and February. Marketings of fed sheep and lambs during January and February totaled 1.4 million head.

## EARLY LAMB CROP

There are about 4 percent more early lambs in the principal early lamb producing States than in 1960. The number of breeding ewes in these States on January 1, was 2 percent higher than a year earlier. The proportion of ewes lambing early was above a year earlier. Kansas, Texas, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and California showed an increase in the number of breeding ewes on farms and ranches on January 1. Decreases were registered in Missouri, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Arizona. The number of early lambs in California, Texas, and Kansas totaled 2.3 million head.

In general, the growth and development of early lambs has been faster than normal. Feed grain and hay supplies have been generally adequate in the early lamb States. Except in the Southeast, weather has been mostly favorable, with a very mild winter reported in the Northwest. Cold weather and snow in the Southeast delayed growth of grass and was unfavorable for early lambs. However, conditions have improved during the last several weeks.

E. B. Hannawald  
*Agricultural Estimates Division*



# HERE'S HOW LIVESTOCK ESTIMATES ARE REVISED . . .

Earlier this year, the Crop Reporting Board estimated the number of livestock on farms and ranches on January 1. These estimates, like most of the Board's first estimates, were preliminary and are subject to change as additional information becomes available.

In the past few months, the Board has been revising the livestock estimates for the period 1955 to 1960. The first of these revisions, which included sows farrowing and pigs saved, was issued in December. Revised January 1 inventory estimates and calf, lamb, and wool crop estimates were released in February. Later this month, revised production, disposition, and income estimates will be available.

The 1959 Census of Agriculture has been the main basis for these revisions. The Board has, however, reappraised the data used in making the original estimates and used other information that has become available.

The first step in this revision process took place in the State statisticians' offices. The statisticians and their staffs brought together all the information that had a bearing on the January 1, 1960 inventory figures for cattle, sheep, and hogs.

The preliminary county totals of the 1959 census were reviewed, analyzed, and compared with the 1954 census and State totals were computed. These State totals had to be projected from the average date of the census enumeration to January 1. This was done by adding births and the number of head shipped into the State, and by subtracting marketings, farm slaughter, and death losses. The Census Bureau also helped by asking a cross section of farmers to report their January 1 inventories, which would measure the change from the date of the Census enumeration.

The State offices analyzed the January information from all sources and came up with a revised estimate for January 1, 1960. With the old benchmark previously established for January 1, 1955, and the new one for 1960,

the estimates for intervening years were reviewed and revised when necessary.

The revised estimates balance out births, inshipments, marketings, farm slaughter, and deaths. For example, for each State the January 1 inventory plus births and the number shipped into the State during the year gives the total supply for the year. Subtracting marketings, farm slaughter, and death loss leaves the number on hand at the end of the year.

The estimates of marketings and inshipments are based largely on livestock movement and slaughter data collected from marketing agencies, State veterinarians, and slaughter plants. In some States year-to-year changes in tax assessments on livestock and annual information from State farm censuses also provided useful measures. All of this information was used to develop the revised estimates.

After the State offices completed their review, summaries of the information used and the revised State estimates were sent to the Crop Reporting Board in Washington. The Board analyzed the State estimates, taking into account data that were available on a regional and national basis but not by States. Revised, or final, estimates were then adopted and published.

These revised estimates represent a thorough analysis of all available information, and they provide a firm starting point for the estimates to be made during the next 5 years.

Robert H. Moats  
*Agricultural Estimates Division*

## Recent USDA Publications

*Market Diseases of Grapes and Other Small Fruits AH-189. 47 pages.*

If you're producing grapes or other small fruits you'll want to get your hands on this booklet. You may obtain a free copy by writing to Agricultural Situation, AMS, USDA, Washington 25, D.C.

# ACREAGE-MARKETING GUIDES

The USDA has announced its 1961 acreage-marketing guides for summer vegetables and summer and fall potatoes. The guides—the results of the USDA's annual survey of market prospects for these crops—are intended to help farmers plan production to fit their markets.

## Summer Vegetables

The biggest problem with last summer's vegetable crops was the weather. The cold, wet spring delayed plantings for several weeks in most areas, and crops made slow progress through June. Most vegetables were in short supply during the early summer as a result. Then, in the late summer, harvests began to come thick and fast, and we had the reverse situation true with oversupplies of many crops.

Assuming that the weather will be closer to normal during 1961, the acreage guides call for about the same acreage of most vegetables as last year. With normal marketing patterns, growers should be able to sell the 1960-sized crop with no trouble.

There are some vegetables, though, that would have found the road to market rocky even with a normal marketing pattern.

Lettuce developed an acute marketing problem last year. Even marketing orders in California and Colorado weren't able to prevent a market glut because of the huge supplies. This year's acreage guides call for a 20 percent cut in acreage in California and a 5 percent reduction in other States.

Onion growers, too, found they had more than they could sell profitably. As late summer harvests became widespread the markets became glutted. To bring the production into line, the guides recommend 10 percent less acreage in New York, Colorado, Idaho, and Oregon, and 5 percent cuts in other onion-producing States.

Sweet corn growers were evidently discouraged last year after several bad seasons, and cut their early summer plantings by 5,000 acres. Demand was good, and total value of sweet corn

sales hit a record high. Sweet corn growers probably can readily market a bit more corn than they did last year, and the acreage guide calls for a 5 percent boost in acreage.

Vegetables for processing were generally in line with demand last year. This year the guides recommend the same, or slightly larger, acreages for most of these vegetables.

## Potatoes . . .

Consumption of potatoes will be up in 1961—not because we're eating more potatoes per person, but because there are more people in this country. Accordingly, the USDA has upped its acreage guides for potatoes to a total of 245 million hundredweight—three percent higher than last year.

The early summer crop has a short marketing season, and growers need to keep production moderate. Last year's crop was the largest in history, and the 1961 guide suggests a two percent acreage cut.

Late summer potatoes enjoyed a good marketing year in 1960, and the guide recommends the same acreage in 1961.

Fall potato acreage last year was the highest in 10 years, and if bad weather hadn't held down yields in some states, production would have shot up more than the 5.5 percent it actually did.

Prices held up during the first half of the season, but by late winter some growers found they had too many potatoes left to sell profitably.

Last year's fall potato acreage was so big that growers will have to cut back about 5 percent even to fit a prospective market that will be 3 percent bigger than it was in 1960.

The guides recommend cuts for several of the major fall-crop States: Maine, down 9 percent; upstate New York, cut 2 percent; Wisconsin, 2 percent; Minnesota, 10 percent; and Idaho, down 6 percent.

You may get a copy of these guides through your local extension agent.



# "Bert" Newell's

## Letter

There must be something to the saying that over time the good will compensate for the bad. It may be it's just another version of the silver lining the clouds are supposed to have. Anyway, I had gotten to one of those periods when everything seemed to go to sixes and sevens, and I was feeling low enough to walk under a sow with a high hat on.

Then things began to happen. A longtime crop reporter from near Monmouth, Illinois, dropped in for a visit. Then another came by from Pennsylvania. Next day a man and his wife from Wyoming paid us a visit. On top of that we had a nice, long letter from one of our good reporters down in southern Virginia. Before the week was out we had had a dozen or so visitors and letters that made us all feel pretty good.

Yes, sir, it's a fact: It seemed like somebody got the tipoff that I was really needing a "pick me up." I'm telling you it sure was a big help to feel that some of the folks on the farms and ranches thought about us and took time out on their visits to Washington to come by and say hello.

Several of our visitors said they just wanted to drop by and visit and see what I look like. Haven't you had the experience of reading a story and conjuring up in your mind a picture of the character and then having that ideal smashed to pieces when you actually saw the guy? Several years ago a wonderful exhibit of ancient art was brought to Washington, and I went to see it. Among the articles were suits of armor that were worn by some famous knights. Now years ago I had read about some of these knights and had pictured them as big fellows who rode off on their steeds to rescue the fair maiden in distress. Boy, did my dreams come down in shambles when I saw that armor! Honest, most of them must have been little guys that hardly weighed as much as the armor they wore. Anyway, my big, brave knights sure did shrink fast.

I guess it's the same way with a lot of things. We have a job that's just not something we would prefer to do so we start thinking about all of the difficulties and problems. The longer we put it off, the worse it gets until we've got ourselves worked up into a first-class stew. Then comes the day. We have to get it done so we move in only to find out that more than half of the problems were just plain imagination.

Here in Ag Estimates we get some of the same kind of misgivings. When conditions are spotty with good and bad prospects intermixed we get to worrying about whether our sample is going to give us a real good picture of the situation. Then when a report is about ready to go, I begin to think about all the people who are watching for those figures. As I watch those newsmen poised on the white line, ready to jump and release the report, I get to thinking about all the people on the other ends of those lines, who are waiting to get the figures. I'll admit that the butterflies begin flitting around in my stomach. But when it's done and I think about the 108,000 farmers and ranchers who helped us make our last report, I feel a lot better. Oh, I don't mean that everyone agrees with us, but we do have a feeling that we've had quite a lot of support for the report.

Excuse me just a minute . . .

Honest to goodness, I had to stop in the middle of this letter to visit with another reporter from South Dakota. What's going on here? I have to admit this is unusual. Now that I have disillusioned another visitor, I might as well tell you I am a smallish sort of guy, 5' 7", and weigh 155 pounds. I haven't as much hair as I used to; in fact, I guess I qualify for the baldhead row. So, now that you won't expect too much, drop in when you are in town. I'm in room 2049 South Agriculture Building, and if I don't happen to be here when you arrive, you will get a warm welcome from any of the Ag Estimates folks who are here.



S. R. Newell  
Chairman, Crop Reporting Board, AMS





Growth Through Agricultural Progress

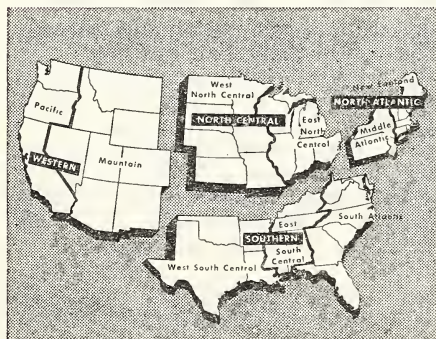
**April 1961**

***In This Issue***

	Page
Emergency Feed Grain Program Gets Underway.....	1
What Are Farmers Going to Plant This Year?.....	3
Consumption of Food Fats— Visible and Invisible.....	4
Outlook.....	5
The Farmer's Share.....	6
Hog Numbers Are Up in 10 Corn Belt States.....	7
Flying Statisticians.....	8
Wool and Mohair Output Up in 1960.....	10
Abundance Aids Needy.....	10
Our Tobacco Exports Are Up..	11
Sheep and Lambs.....	12
Here's How Livestock Estimates Are Revised.....	13
Acreage Marketing Guides....	14

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